

PRESS RELEASE

Announcement by the Ministry of Health on the recommendations of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the AstraZeneca vaccine

At the request of the Minister of Health, the Scientific Advisory Committee on Coronavirus (SAC), in its conference yesterday, evaluated the vaccination program, the availability and the expected deliveries of vaccines, the vaccination coverage rate of the population to date, as well as the issue of serious side effects from vaccinations and the reported severe thrombotic episodes that arose.

From the suggestions submitted by the members of SAC, occurs:

1. The unanimous position that **individuals vaccinated with the 1st dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine should proceed with the 2nd dose of the vaccine, provided that they have not experienced any symptoms of serious side effects after the 1st dose** (thrombotic/thrombocytopenia syndrome). Therefore, these individuals are encouraged to proceed with the 2nd dose of the vaccine as scheduled, which is **especially important for their protection against the virus and its mutations**.
2. Regarding the issue of age restriction in the administration of the AstraZeneca vaccine, **the majority of the members of SAC**, having taken into account the improved epidemiological picture, the availability of vaccines and the benefit of the seamless continuation of the vaccination program, **suggest the recommendation for preference of mRNA technology vaccines (Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna) in individuals under the age of 50**. Therefore, the Ministry of Health **adopts the recommendation of the majority of SAC members** and advises citizens under the age of 50 to choose an mRNA technology vaccine for their vaccination.

The Ministry of Health assures that it is monitoring closely the developments and data emerging in Cyprus and internationally, as well as any new recommendations that may arise from EMA, and is ready to regularly assess the course of the country's epidemiological picture and thereby the vaccination plan, and take all actions with the primary priority of protecting Public Health and the safety of citizens.

Wednesday, 26/5/2021